

Application No. 10/537,646
Amendment dated December 18, 2007
Reply to Office action of November 16, 2007

Remarks

Applicants request that claims 16 and 18 be cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer in an effort to expedite prosecution. Claims 15 and 17 were previously cancelled. Following entry of the above amendment, claims 1-14 remain pending.

I. Objection to the Specification

The Office Action had objected to the specification because there was no brief description of the drawings in the instant application. Applicants submit that this omission was an inadvertent error and have amended the specification to contain a brief description of the drawings, namely for Figures 1 and 2. No new matter has been introduced. Support for this amendment may be found, for example, on page 4, lines 38-42, page 11, lines 38-41, and page 20, lines 1-5 of the originally filed application. As such, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration.

II. Obviousness-type double patenting rejections

Claims 16 and 18 were rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 8 and 10 of copending U.S. Patent Application No. 10/537,646. Claims 16 and 18 were also provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 2 and 10 of U.S. Patent No. 7,179,835.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the propriety of the obviousness-type double patenting rejections, but in an effort to advance prosecution, Applicants hereby cancel claims 16 and 18 effectively mooting the obviousness-type double patenting rejection. Claims 16 and 18 are canceled without prejudice to re-assert the subject matter of those claims in one or more divisional application(s).

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Applicants believe the present claims are in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any outstanding issues with the pending claims, he is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at (919) 483-8406 for expeditious handling.

Respectfully submitted,



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Page 7 of 7